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ABSTRACT

The handbook is intended to assist school districts in Arizona establish effective educational programs for emotionally handicapped children. Information on policies for initiation, organization, and operation of programs is provided, as are recommendations for academic programing, use of ancillary personnel, and behavior management techniques. Basic considerations in establishing a program which are discussed include self-contained and resource programs, teacher and teacher aide selection, physical facilities, and grouping. The examination of selection procedures and personnel needed covers various facets of screening and evaluation and the involvement of school personnel in the screening process. A suggested program for the emotionally handicapped, which emphasizes academic and social skills, presents suggestions on preparatory steps, pupil evaluation, curriculum, motivation, class management, intervention methods, and phasing children into the regular program. (KW)

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HANDBOOK FOR TEACHING

EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

ARIZONA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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FOREWORD

The concepts contained in the Handbook for Teaching Emotionally Handicapped Children have been organized and presented in an effort to assist school districts establish effective educational programs for the emotionally handicapped child.

The Division of Special Education, in preparing this Handbook, has included information relating to policies for initiation, organization, and operation of programs for the emotionally handicapped in the State of Arizona. Also included are recommendations for academic programming, effective use of ancillary personnel and techniques for behavior management.

The State Department of Education is concerned with providing quality educational programs for all school children in the State of Arizona by offering assistance, guidance and leadership with the public schools. We feel this Handbook will be especially helpful to those who are concerned with programs and services for emotionally handicapped children.

W. P. Shofstall, Ph.D
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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C H A P T E R 1

ORGANIZING A PROGRAM FOR THE EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED

This handbook is concerned with the emotionally handicapped child. The term "emotionally handicapped" is preferable because the label "emotionally disturbed" is often used to refer to individuals whose problems are so severe as to necessitate placement in a residential or institutional setting. "Emotional handicap", on the other hand, seems to include a wider range of individuals, most of whom do not need intensive psychiatric care.

The incidence of emotionally handicapped children in a typical classroom varies depending on the criteria, definition and assessment methods used. After review of six major studies, White and Harris (1961) concluded that the rate of serious maladjustment in school children is somewhere between four and seven percent. Abrahamson (1955) and Bower (1961) estimate that approximately ten percent of all children need professional help for their emotional difficulties.

The definition used in Title 15, Chapter Ten, of Arizona Revised Statutes and Arizona's Programs for Exceptional Children states:

> "The emotionally handicapped child (EH) means a child who because of social or emotional problems as determined by evaluation pursuant to section 15-1013, is unable or incapable of meeting the demands of regular classroom programs in the public schools and requires special classes or special services designed to promote his educational and emotional growth and development."

The emotionally handicapped child is capable of functioning in the average or above-average range of intelligence. On individually administered I.Q. tests (typically the WISC or Stanford Binet) this type of child should obtain an I.Q. of 85 or above. Blackham (1967) suggests that the emotionally handicapped child's deviant behavior differs from that of other children because it is more intense, frequent, or of longer duration. That is, these children's reactions are either more extreme in a specific situation, their deviant behavior occurs more often, or their maladaptive behavior is exhibited for a greater length of time. In many cases, emotionally handicapped children will display several deviant reactions.

They may be extremely aggressive or passive, impulsive or over-controlled, extremely excitable, apathetic or withdrawn. If any of these behaviors are intense, frequently exhibited and characteristic of a child for a long period of time, his behavior is presumed to be more deviant or impaired.

Another major characteristic of the emotionally handicapped child is the difficulty he has in relating to both peers and teachers. Bower (1969) has indicated that these children are often deficient in their ability to be sympathetic and warm in response to others. The emotionally handicapped child often has few close friends and does not enjoy working or playing with other children. He is often socially isolated and unhappy in his solitude.

The emotionally handicapped child's inability to enjoy others or himself is based, in part, on his low self-concept. As Blackham (1967) suggests, individuals with low self-esteem make poor adjustment to their environment. Similarly, Bower (1969) has indicated that a child's self-description (self-concept) is an important criterion in identifying emotionally handicapped children.

In addition to the characteristics already noted, emotionally handicapped children are unable to work at levels commensurate with their abilities. The emotionally handicapped child usually experiences failure early in his academic endeavors which continues until his performance in the elementary grades averages two years below the level at which he is capable of functioning. Consequently, each year the child is denied his right to special help he falls further behind his peers and the prognosis for healthy adaption in later life becomes more pessimistic.

Although many children manifest their emotional handicaps at an early age, in others, signs of emotional difficulty do not appear until the later school years. As Bower (1969) mentions, environmental changes can sometimes trigger emotional difficulties at any time. Consequently, it is desirable for schools to establish programs for the emotionally handicapped at all ages and grade levels.

Since the effects of emotional handicaps are often cumulative and disabling as the child gets older, early identification and placement is desirable. Less severe disabilities are more readily altered and the child's healthy development is more quickly facilitated.

BASIC CONSIDERATIONS IN ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM FOR EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Prior to the establishment of a program for handicapped children, it is vitally important that the school personnel understand the basic concepts of the program. The guidelines set forth in the Tentative Administrator's Guide, Programs for Exceptional Children should be followed. However, this is only the first basic stepin establishing a program for the emotionally handicapped. These criteria are identified below:

1. The child must be capable of functioning at an average or above average intellectual level.

2. The child must be educationally handicapped in at least one or more major subject area. This will typically mean that the child in grades one to three will usually be a year or more retarded academically, and students in grades four to twelve will show a deficit of approximately two or more years.

3. Special classes may be established for children with various types of emotional and social difficulties. This implies that the program is not only for children who display their emotional problems through aggressive behavior but all other deviant behavior as well, including those children who are withdrawn.

4. Parental consent must be secured before a child is placed in a program for the emotionally handicapped.

It is apparent from these criteria that classes for the emotionally handicapped are established for children whose emotional difficulties interfere with their ability to learn. Emotionally handicapped classes cannot be a "dumping ground" for children who may frustrate the classroom teacher.

Teachers may be tempted to refer children who are achieving at grade level or above but who are behavior problems in the classroom. This type of child cannot, according to state guidelines, be placed in a classroom for the emotionally handicapped.

The first criterion, that children in emotionally handicapped programs must be of average or above intelligence, usually is not misunderstood. If a child's score on a standardized group intelligence test is low, but it is believed the child is actually able to function at an average or near-average level, the child should be referred. Evaluation is then performed by a competent psychologist to determine whether group test scores are accurate and whether the child is admissable to a special class.

The second criterion is concerned with the determination of the extent to which the child is educationally handicapped. Although it was stated that a child should typically be educationally retarded one year in the primary grades and two years in the upper grades before he is recommended for an emotionally handicapped program, other factors should be considered. The specific areas of subject matter deficiency, as well as strengths, should also be investigated. For example, a student may be functioning at grade level in arithmetic but his proficiency in reading may be very inadequate. Though the child's overall achievement level may not meet the above criterion, the specific subjects in which he is deficient may still make him eligible for an emotionally handicapped program.

As stated in the third criterion, the emotionally handicapped program is for all children exhibiting various types of emotional difficulties. Wickman (1929), some time ago, showed that teachers view aggressive behavior as more severe than do mental health clinicians. Withdrawn behavior was regarded as far less serious by teachers than by mental health clinicians. More recent studies (Stouffer, 1952) have shown that there has been a change in teacher attitudes; e.g., teachers do recognize that the withdrawn child may have just as serious emotional problems as the child who is disruptive in the classroom.

However, there is still a tendency for teachers to be very concerned about the aggressive child since he is the most difficult to manage. School personnel must understand that the program is concerned with helping children who can profit from a class for the emotionally handicapped, rather than "removing the troublemakers from the room."

Parental consent, as stated above, is required by the law before a child is placed in a class for the emotionally handicapped. Teachers can do a great deal to lay the initial groundwork for parental acceptance and understanding of the program. When a parent does not seem to understand the program or is resistant to it, and yet the child appears to be a good candidate for the program, it may be desirable to have the teacher direct the parents to speak with the school psychologist, counselor, or social worker. It may also be desirable for the teacher to inform the parents that the final recommendation for placement rests with the psychologist.

The school staff should recognize that when a child is taken out of his regular classroom and placed in a special education program, it is the goal of the special education program to return the child to his regular classroom as soon as he is able to benefit from it. The regular classroom teacher should be prepared to accept the child upon his return. In some cases, a child will not return to his regular classroom during that school year and may have to stay in a program for the emotionally handicapped for a number of years. Other children may not require a full year before they are able to function adequately in a regular classroom. Since the length of stay for children in a program for the emotionally handicapped varies, the child's regular teacher should maintain frequent contact with his special education teacher.

The points discussed above should be carefully considered. It is important that administrators and teachers understand each phase of the program. Misunderstanding often leads to considerable friction between the special education staff and the regular staff, and unfortunately, the children are the ones most affected. Consequently, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that the school staff understand the basic concepts of the program for the emotionally handicapped, and that the lines of communication be well established and maintained.

Self-Contained and Resource Programs

Programs for the emotionally handicapped child fall into two main categories: self-contained and resource programs. In a self-contained program, children attend a special education class all day. Resource programs require the child to attend the special education program for part of the school day and then return to the regular classroom. In the resource program, a child might meet with an itinerant teacher for a few hours each day for special assistance and be integrated in the regular classroom for the remaining hours.

The needs of a particular school district will determine which plan is most feasible. Typically, with children in junior high and high school, integrated (resource) programs may be more feasible. A pupil may attend special education classes for instructional areas of greatest deficiency and return to be with his peers for other subjects. In an elementary school, a self-contained classroom might be more practical. However, there may be some instances where the reverse may be true.

In the material presented below suggestions are made to help districts in setting up programs for the emotionally handicapped. These suggestions are based on the opinions of specialists as well as studies reported in the literature. The suggestions may be adapted in total by a school district or might be modified to suit the particular needs.

Teacher and Teacher Aide Selection

The selection of teachers and teacher aides to staff a program for the emotionally handicapped should be given careful attention by administrators. Educational qualifications and personality characteristics are equally important. Obviously, the qualifications of the people who staff the program are central to its success.

Teacher Requirements - The minimum requirements for teaching the emotionally handicapped child in the state of Arizona are specified in the Tentative Administrator's Guide, Programs for Exceptional Children. These requirements are, of course, the minimum established by the state. It is also suggested that in addition to these requirements, a teacher of the emotionally handicapped should take the following courses. Prevention of Emotional Disturbance, Understanding the Emotionally Disturbed Child, Methods for Teaching the Emotionally Handicapped, Curriculum Material for the Emotionally Handicapped, Understanding of Psychological Tests, Educational Psychology and Behavior Management. Two years teaching experience in a regular class setting and supervised internship with the emotionally handicapped is also recommended.

Specifying what personality requirements a teacher should have for teaching the emotionally handicapped is a difficult task. Hewett (1968, p. 235) has indicated that desired teacher characteristics often "...imply a saintliness and a degree of perfection, somewhat unrealistic to expect from most teachers who work with disturbed children." Hewett does list seven personality characteristics

which he feels are desirable in dealing with the emotionally handicapped child. He presents these in rank order with the first being the most important.

1. Objectivity. This characteristic suggests the importance of understanding related concepts in psychology and special education defining educational goals in terms most people can understand, obtaining objective information relevant to successful teaching, and carefully separating one's own needs from those of the pupil. The ability to accept feedback regarding one's teaching is also implied in this characteristic.

2. Flexibility. This attribute indicates the extent to which one is able to shift teaching methods and goals to fit the needs of the learner.

3. Structure. The ability to establish as well as maintain reasonable standards for both behavior and academic achievement.

4. Resourcefulness. The ability to develop creative and meaningful approaches to teaching.

5. Social Reinforcement. The ability to give positive approval and attention to students to encourage desirable student behavior.

6. Curriculum Expertise. Mastery of both curriculum content and methods appropriate for teaching the emotionally handicapped child.

7. Serving as an appropriate intellectual model. Exemplifying in behavior those intellectual characteristics we wish children to imitate.

Of course, any list of personality characteristics is subject to the bias of the author and related to the type of program that is established. In certain models, such as those using a non-directive approach, a requirement for becoming involved in students' emotional concerns might be made. Hewett, however, strongly emphasizes more objectivity and careful separation of emotional needs of teacher and child. Until adequate research has been done, reliance will have to be placed on the professional opinions of specialists.

Teacher Aides - The emotionally handicapped child presents a multitude of needs and deficiencies which must be properly handled. Besides being deficient in a variety of skill areas, the emotionally handicapped child is often disruptive, easily frustrated and impulsive. Consequently, it is desirable to utilize teacher aides whenever possible. Teacher aides can perform a number of significant roles. They may assist in individualizing instruction by individual tutoring and preparation of instructional materials. They can assist the teacher with a number of classroom management problems. Although it is probably desirable to have paid aides, Hewett (1968) has suggested the use of volunteers. PTA volunteers may be successfully used. Hewett believes it is feasible to utilize college and high school students and, in some instances, more mature students in the upper grades. Ideally, teacher aides should have many of the major characteristics listed above for teachers. Her role, however, will differ from the teacher in that she will support the classroom teacher.

Physical Facilities

Arizona law requires that facilities used in special education programs must be

equal to or exceed those found in the regular school program. This means that the size of the room, materials and supplies should be equivalent for both regular or special education classes.

Certain types of basic furniture is more desirable for emotionally handicapped children than others. Individual tables are preferable to desks (with storage space) because emotionally handicapped children often spend a good deal of time playing with items in a desk. Essential items (pencils, erasers, etc.) should be kept on the desk while non-essential items should be kept in a separate storage area. Chairs should be movable to prevent hyperactive children from feeling too confined in chairs that are attached to the floor. Movable chairs and tables allow the teacher to be flexible in rearranging her classroom for various activities.

Besides the usual equipment found in most classes, it is suggested that the classroom contain two main additional facilities: study booths and an activity area. Haring and Phillips (1962) suggest that study booths can be particularly effective with hyperactive children who are easily distracted. These authorities caution teachers not to use these booths for punitive purposes, but rather to provide a place where the child can learn with a minimum of distraction.

Shores and Hubrich (1969) studied the effects of cubicles in educating emotionally handicapped children. They found that the use of cubicles or study booths increased the amount of attending behavior of emotionally handicapped children. However, they also found that the use of study booths in itself will not necessarily increase academic performance.

When finances are limited, study booths can be constructed out of large cardboard boxes found in grocery stores. One side can be cut out and the box can be attached to the desk. Such do-it-yourself constructions are economical as well as helpful.

Homme, Csanyi, Gonzales, and Rechs (1969) suggest the use of an activity area in the classroom. This will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter. This center should contain activities which students can engage in quietly. Activities appropriate for younger children are puzzles, storybooks, tinker toys and art activities. For older children, in the junior and senior high schools, materials such as jigsaw puzzles, dominoes, books, magazines, comics, playing tic-tac-toe and chess are recommended. In addition to these activities, many boys in all grade levels seem to enjoy doing science experiments. Science equipment can be kept in this activity area. Other useful items for an activity area are typewriters, tape recorders, a phonograph (especially one with earplugs which the child can listen to individually), class pets and filmstrips. Various games that are appropriate to the age level of the children should also be included.

Grouping of Children

The maximum daily membership in the classroom for the emotionally handicapped is limited to ten students. It is recommended in the Tentative Administrator's Guide that the children be grouped according to age. The grouping that is suggested is:

Primary class:	Pupils 6 - 8 years
Intermediate class:	Pupils 9 - 11 years
Junior High class:	Pupils 12 - 14 years
High School class:	Pupils 15 years and older

Various factors such as physical and social maturity, severity of emotional handicap, age and grade range of the pupil, size of the room and equipment available, teacher experience, and availability of classroom assistants, and/or professional auxillary services, may make it desirable to modify these age groupings.

A typical classroom for the emotionally handicapped should probably be composed of children with various types of emotional difficulties. In therapy groups, Ginott (1961) recommends that children should be grouped so

> "....that they exert a corrective influence upon each other. The group should consist of children with dissimilar syndromes, so that each child will have the opportunity to associate with personalities different from and complementary to his own. An effeminate boy needs to identify with more masculine playmates, and the over-sheltered child can learn independence from more autonomous group members." (pp. 30-31)

Ginott's concept of "corrective identification" seems applicable in selecting children for emotionally handicapped classes. Children with deviant behavior need models that exhibit the desired behavior to be learned.

CHAPTER 2

PROCEDURES AND PERSONNEL NEEDED FOR PROPER SELECTION OF CHILDREN

This chapter considers the process of screening and referring children for evaluation for the emotionally handicapped program. The assessment process requires the joint contributions of several specialists who work cooperatively as an interdisciplinary team.

SCREENING AND EVALUATION OF EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Thorough screening and evaluation of children are prerequisites to placement in a program for the emotionally handicapped. The responsibility of screening children is placed under the direction of the chief administrative official of the school district or county, or the person who is designated by him as having the responsibility for special education. The evaluation must be done by an approved psychologist or a psychiatrist. Parental consent is required before a child can be placed in a program for the emotionally handicapped.

The administrative official or the person responsible for special education should make certain that appropriate and complete information is obtained regarding the child. Complete diagnostic information is necessary to determine the child's eligibility and his ability to profit from the program for the emotionally handicapped.

Hollister and Goldson (1965) list seven screening methods for identifying children with emotional handicaps. Modification of these methods is needed to conform with State standards as well as to obtain additional information needed to complete the assessment procedures. The procedures for identifying and assessing children with emotional handicaps are as follows:

1. Teacher nomination
2. Educational test data
3. Peer and self-evaluation
4. Cumulative record data
5. Behavioral frequency count
6. Parental interviewing and home visits
7. Psychological test data

Each of these steps will be discussed and suggested ways of obtaining the information is presented below.

Teacher Nomination

Referral of children for evaluation is usually initiated by teacher nomination. They have excellent opportunities to observe children in a variety of situations and to identify children whose behavior deviates from their age mates. There is a tendency, however, for some teachers to refer children who are disruptive rather than those who are withdrawn but also emotionally handicapped. Because of this tendency, it is desirable to have teachers complete a behavior rating on children they wish considered. A rating scale helps the teacher consider each child carefully and the extent to which certain types of behavior is exhibited.

In junior and senior high, where teacher-pupil contact is limited, a behavior rating scale is strongly recommended for those who are nominated as candidates for the program. Each teacher who has had the pupil in his class or knows the child, should be asked to fill out a behavior rating scale. In this way, the various teacher ratings can be compared to determine if the pupil displays his deviant behavior in most situations, or whether the pupil's behavior is simply a misperception of a single teacher.

There are various behavior rating scales that have been used to obtain information about a child's emotional handicaps. Bower (1969) developed a rating scale with which teachers rate their total class in rank order for eight specific behaviors. Rubin, Sinson, and Betwee (1966) present a behavior check list which has 39 different behaviors. The teacher places one check mark by any of the behaviors which seem to be representative of the child's typical behavior and two check marks by those which the child exhibits frequently.

Rubin, Sinson, and Betwee factor-analyzed this check list and obtained seven factors that made up the list. These factors were:

1. Disorientation and maladaption to the environment
2. Antisocial behavior
3. Unassertive, over-conforming behavior
4. Neglect
5. Infantile behavior
6. Immature social behavior
7. Irresponsible behavior

A similar instrument has been presented by Quay, Morse, and Cutler (1966). Hewett (1968) presents an instrument to teachers on which children are rated on a three point scale. The scale has 21 main items broken down into the major behaviors that Hewett believes are prerequisites to learning. These behaviors are: attention, response, order, exploratory, social, mastery, and achievement. In addition to the 21 main items, there are six items which the teacher rates concerning what type of rewards the child seeks. These range from needing trinkets and candy to finding satisfaction through achievement.

Scales of the type mentioned above are concerned with a wide variety of behavioral difficulties. All of them are valuable in helping the teacher give an objective description of the child.

Educational Test Data

Description of the child's behavior, as outlined above, is the first step in screening children for the program. The second step is an examination of educational test data. State law requires this type of information to ascertain whether the child's emotional handicap is interfering with educational achievement. Achievement test scores can be used to obtain this information. Teachers should report all the scores of the various subtests as well as the total grade level score to help determine in which areas the child is having difficulty. Emotionally handicapped children will sometimes have average achievement in one subject area and be far below expected achievement in another subject.

Readiness tests should be used with younger children, and the scores should be reported in the same manner as achievement test data. In addition to the standardized achievement test, teachers should also include the child's performance on teacher made examinations. The child's average score, as well as the range of test scores on teacher examinations, provide valuable information. These test scores should also be analyzed by specific subject areas, and, when possible, an evaluation of the various skills that are needed for each subject area should be made. This would be similar to the manner in which achievement tests are presented. For example, in reporting a child's ability in arithmetic, teachers should indicate how the child is functioning in various skills such as arithmetic computation and understanding of arithmetic concepts.

Peer and Self-Evaluation

Emotionally handicapped children are frequently not accepted by their peers. Often these children also have inadequate self-concepts. Various scales can be used to assess how a student is viewed by his peers and how he views himself. Bower (1969) has developed a number of sociometric and self-concept instruments for different grade levels. One such peer rating instrument that can be used for kindergarten and primary grades is called the Class Picture. The test is administered individually in approximately 15 or 20 minutes. The Picture Game test developed by Bower can be used to assess the child's view of self. This instrument is also used in grades K-3. Children in grades three to seven are given an instrument called the Class Play to obtain peer evaluations of each other. Although the Class Play also provides information about how a child views himself, Bower has another instrument for children in these grade levels which gives a more detailed assessment about self-concept called Thinking About Self.

The Student Survey developed by Bower is for use in obtaining peer evaluation grades 7-12. It is recommended that this instrument be administered in classes where students have an opportunity to get to know each other socially and intellectually. A pupil's homeroom would be an excellent place to administer this test. In classes where students do not have this opportunity to get to know each other, this instrument should not be given. To obtain information about how a pupil views himself an instrument called a Self Test can be administered to those students in grades seven to twelve.

A number of tests appropriate for various grade levels and for various assessment purposes is presented by Fox, Luszki, and Schmuck (1966) in their booklet titled Diagnosing Classroom Learning Environments. They present ways of obtaining information about peer and self-perception with children of all ages, even those who are too young to be able to read. Similarly, Gordon (1966) presents a number of instruments for assessing how pupils view each other, as well as how a child views himself. Although these instruments are basically for children in the upper elementary and high school, some may appropriately be used with younger children.

Cumulative Record Data

Besides obtaining information about how the child is presently functioning by teacher rating scales, achievement test data, and peer and self-evaluation, background or historical information is also valuable. Information from cumulative records will often indicate a history of emotional and educational problems. Cumulative records, teacher comments and ratings of child behavior, provide an abundance of this type of information.

The cumulative record helps to determine the recency and severity of the child's difficulties. The extent to which the child's problems are acute (and recently manifest) as compared to those which are of a chronic nature, is important diagnostically and is essential in determining prognosis and correction.

Health and medical data are also valuable in diagnosis and formulating remedial action. Physical deficiencies may greatly impair learning efficiency and must be corrected if they are remedial or reversible. Chronic illnesses may require program modification or necessitate continuous medication.

Behavioral Frequency Count

Rating scales, like those discussed above, are useful but are subject to individual perceptions and biases. Behavioral frequency counts, on the other hand, give an objective measurement of the child's deviant behavior. Through behavioral observations in the classroom, Wherry and Quay (1969) have demonstrated that normal and

emotionally handicapped children can be differentiated. Wherry and Quay suggest that observers record behavior of children in three main categories, listed below:

1. Deviant behavior (not sitting in one seat, physical contact with others, noise, etc.)

2. Attending behavior (attention to task, daydreaming, etc.)

3. Teacher contact (recording who initiated the contact with the student)

Using this approach, a child is observed for a period of 20 seconds, then the behavior is recorded for 10 seconds and then he is observed for another 20 second period. The total time of observation should be 15 minutes each day. Behavioral observations are continued for several days to obtain a representative sample of the child's behavior.

Hewett, Taylor, and Artuso (1969) also include behavioral observations as part of the screening process for children being considered for a program for the emotionally handicapped. The criterion they used was attention to task. They have observers record the number of seconds the child's eyes are appropriately oriented to a task that had been assigned by the teacher. Each child was observed for five minute segments. Five separate samples of his behavior were recorded for a total of 25 minutes.

Blackham and Silberman (1970) reviewed literature on observing and recording behavior, and present both simplified and more involved methods for recording this behavior. They report that there are certain types of behavior frequency counts that a teacher can take while teaching in her classroom. However, other types of behavior frequency counts require a special observer (volunteer parents and teacher aides have been used in various studies to do this) to record the behavior of the child recommended for the program for emotionally handicapped.

Parental Interviewing and Home Visits

To meet requirements of Arizona State law, a parent or guardian of a child must consent before the child is placed in a program for the emotionally handicapped. Consequently, a parent interview must be held. The interview has two basic objectives. First, information is secured regarding the child's previous history. Both emotional and physical characteristics and the developmental background of the child should be investigated. Second, the interview should inform the parent about the child's difficulties and the reasons why it is desirable to place the child in the program.

Parents may be reluctant to come to the school. When this is the case, the teacher and social worker should arrange a home visit. If a school social worker is not a member of a school staff, another person from the school, such as a school psychologist, counselor, or principal, should make the visit. In bilingual homes, it is desirable to take a person who speaks the chosen language of the family.

If parents cannot accept the need for placement of their child in the special program, the teacher should ask assistance from other school personnel. School psychologist, counselors, and social workers are trained to deal with such situations and help the parents to accept placement of their child in a program for the emotionally handicapped.

Psychological Test Data

As specified in the Tentative Administrator's Guide, it is required that an evaluation be made by at least one specialist in a field relevant to the child's handicap. For emotionally handicapped children, an approved school psychologist and/or licensed

psychiatrist must evaluate the child before he can be placed in a program for the emotionally handicapped. An individual I.Q. test will usually be administered to determine the child's present level of functioning. In addition, instruments which assess the child's perceptual motor functioning and his personality dynamics should be given. Diagnostic evaluation should clearly identify the child's difficulties and contain suggestions for effective teaching and remediation.

INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL IN SCREENING EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

In the Tentative Administrator's Guide, Programs for Exceptional Children, it was recommended that a team approach should be used in identifying and evaluating candidates. The team should include at least three of the following people:

Administrator or Special Education Personnel
Counselor
Psychologist
Nurse
School Social Worker
Other School Personnel (curriculum expert, special education teacher and child's regular classroom teacher)

The use of a school team can greatly facilitate the job of screening children for the program. Too often, however, the team concept is abused. Members of the team function independently rather than as a cooperating body. Consequently, to ensure proper evaluation and placement, the contribution of each specialist must be utilized and respected.

Chief Administrative Official or Person Responsible for Special Education

The chief administrative official of the school district or county must either be directly responsible for the special education program or assign another individual that responsibility. The administrator of the special education program should coordinate the functions of the various team members. It is also the responsibility of the person in charge of special education to make sure that parents have been informed and agree to child placement in the program for emotionally handicapped. The administrator must be certain that the requirements are met, (ARS 15-1013 and 14), and the documents properly completed. Included among them is the written approval of the parent or guardian. The administrator or director of special education is also responsible for the review of special education placement once each semester if it is requested by the parent or guardian of the child or recommended by the special education teacher.

Counseling Personnel

It is the responsibility of special school personnel to help teachers in their assessment of children in their classrooms. When a particular child is referred for special education and has more than one teacher, the counselor should help to coordinate the activities of the various teachers in evaluating the child's assets and limitations. The school counselor may help prescribe effective methods for working with the child. The counselor may serve in a liaison capacity to interpret school information to psychologist and psychiatrist.

Psychological Personnel

The psychologist and/or the psychiatrist is responsible for determining eligibility for placement in a special education program. These specialists review the data gathered on the child and make comprehensive assessments of the child's personality

structure and emotional difficulties. These findings, as well as those of other team members, are used to make a decision regarding placement. Along with other team members, the psychologist and/or the psychiatrist should help the teacher plan with curriculum techniques that best meet the needs of the child. Recommended teaching and classroom management procedures should be an essential part of the evaluation. In some cases where it is believed that a child should also receive private therapy, the psychologist or psychiatrist should make such recommendations to the parent(s).

The School Nurse

The school nurse is responsible for providing health and medical history information. She should carefully note chronic illnesses or medical problems requiring continuing attention and that require modification of program. If a child takes medication regularly, she must so inform the involved individuals and explain its effects on the child.

School Social Worker

The school social worker functions as an intermediary between home and school. Such a person works with the parents to help them accept the child's difficulties and the desirability of special class placement. The social worker helps the parents understand their involvement in the child's problems and interprets the school program to the parents. Also, the social worker can be a valuable source of suggestions regarding some child management problems.

Other School Personnel

Other personnel on the school staff have important contributions to make in identifying and evaluating children for placement in a program for the emotionally handicapped. The child's regular classroom teacher is an invaluable data source regarding the child's school or academic performance and his typical behavior style. His observations should be solicited and utilized in determining eligibility.

The special education teacher of the class for the emotionally handicapped is also a valuable team member. This individual can help evaluate the degree to which a child can profit from existing programs and methods that may be helpful in correcting the child's difficulties.

If the child is not placed in a program for the emotionally handicapped, then the special education teacher may be able to offer some suggestions to the regular classroom teacher for helping the child.

CHAPTER 3

A SUGGESTED PROGRAM FOR EDUCATING EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

In this chapter we will present some suggestions that can be adapted for use in special education programs for the emotionally handicapped child. The program to be presented is primarily academic or educational rather than therapeutic in nature. Hence, it will focus on the promotion of academic and social skills. Although therapeutic outcomes are not focused on directly, therapeutic effects (change in self concept and improved attitudes toward school and others) are likely to result. The program is highly structured and is based on the research of specialists in the education of emotionally handicapped children.

Initial Preparatory Steps

Emotionally handicapped children tend to profit most from a program that is carefully planned and systematically structured. Therefore, before an actual class is launched, certain preparatory steps must be taken. Each child must be carefully evaluated to determine the exact academic and/or skill level at which he is functioning. Once these levels have been ascertained for each child, appropriate instructional materials consistent with the needs of each child must be selected. A third essential step requires the specification of an over-all classroom design. The design should specify desirable procedures for motivational management, how learning activities will be structured, how disruptive behavior will be handled and the limits or regulations to be used in the classroom. These facets are discussed in the material that follows.

Pupil Evaluation

Although information provided by the child's regular classroom teacher is valuable, it is desirable to identify specifically the levels at which a child is functioning in a number of areas. As Nolen, Kunzelmann and Haring have noted (1967), achievement tests do not always provide behavioral definitions of skill levels. Consequently, the skills the child has learned and will need to learn, must be described operational in terms of skill sequences. Ideally, a curriculum expert should be employed to administer a comprehensive educational test battery to determine each child's present academic functioning. Strengths, weaknesses, and modalities of learning should be assessed. The curriculum expert could then prescribe very specific instructional materials, monitor the child's academic progress, and/or adjust the curriculum as the need arises throughout the child's stay in the program.

If a curriculum expert is not available, an evaluation should be conducted by the special education teacher. One instrument that would prove beneficial for this purpose is Valett's "Remediation of Learning Disabilities". In his instrument, Valett (1967) has identified and described a number of basic learning abilities. These basic learning abilities are grouped into six areas:

> Gross Motor Development: The extent to which large muscles are developed and used appropriately. Fourteen gross motor activities are utilized in assessing this area of development.
>
> Sensory Motor Integration: The ability to execute both fine and gross motor movements (balance, directionality, laterality, etc.).
>
> Perceptual-Motor Skills: The ability to perform specific auditory-visual and motor activities. This area is exemplified by skills such as auditory acuity, auditory memory, visual acuity, visual-motor memory and others.

Language Development: The extent to which the basic psycholinguistic abilities have been acquired. Included in this category are vocabulary, articulation, word attack skills, spelling and other language skills.

Conceptual Skills: The level of concept attainment and the ability to reason. Skills and abilities illustrative of this area are number concepts, general information, comprehension.

Social Skills: The ability to relate to or get along with others as well as the ability to solve social problems.

Valett has devised scales on which children may be evaluated on each of the basic learning abilities. He has also development rather than comprehensive suggestions for the facilitation or remediation of each of the basic areas.

Comprehensive evaluation of performance and attained skills, along with the identification of deficiencies in a fashion similar to procedures developed by Valett, naturally leads to instructional and remedial activities appropriate to each pupil. These assessments of each individual pupil provide excellent orientation for curriculum building.

Curriculum

It would be of little value to engage in a lengthy diagnostic workup on a child if proper curriculum materials did not follow. Materials can be obtained from many commercial sources. In working with children who had learning problems, Noelen, Kunzelmann and Haring (1967) used various programmed materials and parts of different texts and workbooks in dealing with junior high school students. Students who are emotionally handicapped, especially in the upper grades, will differ greatly in their abilities in the same subject area. That is why the teacher of the emotionally handicapped program must acquaint herself with many different sources so she can individualize instruction.

In the above study by Noelen, et.al., and in another study (McKenzie, Clark, Wolfe, Kothera, and Benson, 1968) programmed instructional materials are stressed whenever these are available. An example of programmed materials would be the Sullivan Reading Series. If programmed materials are not available as was suggested above, assignments should be taken from various workbooks. It would probably be best if the sheets from the workbook were separated, and instead of the child receiving the whole workbook at one time, he was given his daily assignment to complete. The reason behind this is because emotionally handicapped children sometimes get overwhelmed by seeing a full bock and give up before they even have a chance to begin.

A good deal of time will have to be spent by the classroom teacher in obtaining suitable curriculum materials for students in her class. Once, however, the teacher becomes familiar with what types of materials are available, her task the following year will require a great deal less effort and time. Needless to say, the effort that is expended initially will reap many dividends in helping emotionally handicapped children to learn.

Valett presents in his book, The Remediation of Learning Disabilities, some sample programs that can be used in working with children who lack various of the basic learning abilities that were defined under pupil evaluation. In another book, Valett (1969) presents a series of references that can be further used to increase the curriculum for dealing with specific types of problems. In this latter book, Valett gives suggestions for curriculum materials that range from primary grades all the way through high school.

In some cases, there may not be curriculum material available for a specific type of disability. In those cases, it will require the teacher's creativity to help the child overcome his deficit. The teacher may have to devise a series of materials which will sequence (successively approximate) the behavior that the teacher desires to teach the child. Siegel (1969) gives some examples of how the teacher might have to devise some materials in teaching the child a new behavior. This means that the teacher must break down the learning task that the child is having trouble with into its smallest parts. For example, he recommends that when a child is having difficulty with an abstraction, the teacher should give the child concrete materials to work with. Siegel states that arithmetic is an ideal area for the use of concrete materials when children are having difficulty with it. Beads, discs, pegs, etc., can be used in teaching math concepts. Siegel states that even complex arithmetic concepts can be taught through concrete materials such as teaching weight through a scale, temperature with a thermometer, properties of a circle with a compass. Even algebra, he states, can be easily grasped when it is parted on the X and Y axises of a graph.

Breaking down the task the child has to learn and using suitable curriculum materials pertains not only to academic type learning but also to the teaching of various physical skills. Siegel (1969) gives some suggestions how this approach might be applied to teaching a child with poor coordination how to catch a ball. He recommends that first a balloon be used and the child allowed to catch it and play with it. After he seems to have mastered this experience, Siegel recommends that the child move to a large rubber ball, then eventually to smaller balls until he is able to adequately catch it. If catching is too difficult for the child, then the teacher should practice rolling the ball before catching is attempted. It can be seen from this that often simple materials can be used in teaching the child some new behaviors.

In the use of curriculum materials with emotionally handicapped children, Gallagher (1970) points out that the teacher must be very flexible in her use of curriculum materials. This is because sometimes an emotionally handicapped child will encounter unexpected difficulties and the various materials that were planned for the following day will have to be postponed until the child is able to understand the present material. Gallagher (1970) states that scheduling for an emotionally handicapped child will require an inordinate amount of teacher's time; but once the teacher familiarizes herself with various curriculum materials and understands the procedures this planning time will be greatly reduced.

Individualization of instruction will continually seek a good deal of the teacher's time. Emotionally handicapped children will require a good deal of systematic planning so that the final goal of an emotionally handicapped program can be implemented. That goal is to return the child to his regular classroom with the minimum amount of difficulty so that he will be able to succeed both academically and socially in a regular classroom setting and not require special education.

Motivation

In this chapter, we have discussed ways of diagnosing children to determine various learning deficits as well as some suggested ideas for curriculum materials. These two steps are just part of the hierarchy that is needed in establishing a program for the emotionally handicapped child. Diagnosis and curriculum materials alone are not enough. Many children who are emotionally handicapped are unmotivated to learn. School for these children has been a relatively negative experience. These children do not seem to obtain satisfaction from learning new material. These emotionally handicapped children differ from children found in the regular classroom in that they are not as concerned with teacher praise and approval.

Since the emotionally handicapped child is not motivated in the same way that children in the regular classroom are motivated, it means that other methods must be found. In recent years, behavior modification methods based on B. F. Skinner's operant learning theory has been shown to be a highly effective way of motivating children. Often, in the initial stages of teaching a new behavior, whether this is an academic or social skill, the use of extrinsic reinforcers have to be employed. It is through the proper use of a motivational system that pupils of all grade levels have been able to learn academic and social skills which they previously had rejected. It is important to note here, before the use of reinforcement is discussed in detail, that the goal of the reinforcement approach is to move the child away from being dependent upon external sources for obtaining his reinforcement to moving him to the highest level of learning, which is caring about learning for learning's sake...that is, enjoyment in learning. This will have to be done through a gradual process. This process, briefly, involves rewarding the child frequently when he is learning new material, gradually rewarding him less frequently but at the same time pairing of teacher praise so that the child is now concerned with working for both extrinsic reinforcers and teacher praise. Slowly, the goal is to have the child be concerned with teacher praise as well as obtain satisfaction for what he has learned. Finally, it would be hoped that he would learn, as stated, above, for the sake of learning.

Motivation and Classroom Management

Although evaluation of specific learner needs and appropriate instructional materials are essential, proper pupil motivation is an equally crucial element in classroom management. The old cliche, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink," appropriately describes the situation. Emotionally handicapped children have little intrinsic motivation that can be utilized to promote adequate involvement in learning. Extrinsic sources of motivation must often be used.

With the development of behavior modification procedures, several approaches for managing pupil motivation, learning and behavior have emerged. There are three such methods that appear applicable in a classroom for the emotionally handicapped. They may be described as social reinforcement, contingency management and token reinforcement approaches. For the best results, all three approaches should be used together. Each is discussed below.

Social Reinforcement (Teacher approval and attention) - In educational circles it is well known that teacher interest, approval and attention serve as important stimulants for learning. In teacher preparation programs, teachers have often been urged to accentuate the positive, be free with praise and to take an active interest in their pupils. Generally, this is good advice when properly used. But, indiscriminant interest, attention or approval may not have the desirable effects if the teacher does not have adequate reinforcement properties (his approval is not valued by the pupils) or if teacher approval or attention is given when a pupil has behaved in an undesirable way. To increase the frequency or strength of specific pupil behavior, social reinforcement (attention, approval, etc.) must be given immediately following the performance of a response or behavior that is considered desirable. Undesirable behavior must be completely ignored (not reinforced either negatively or positively).

The proper use of teacher attention to control pupil behavior has been shown to be effective with children in elementary (Hall, Lund & Jackson, 1968) school as well as in high school (McAllister, Stachowich, Baer & Conderman, 1969). The effective use of teacher attention was useful in decreasing isolate play in young children (Harris & Wolf, 1964). The use of positive attention has also been demonstrated effective in promoting certain types of academic skills. Zimmerman and Zimmerman (1962) cite the case of an 11-year old boy who frequently misspelled words. Each time a word was not spelled correctly the teacher would ignore the child and he was permitted to make as

many attempts as he needed to spell the word correctly. When a word was finally spelled correctly, the boy was praised and then given another word. This procedure continued until all the words for the day were correctly spelled. The teacher would then place an A on the child's chart and talk or work with him. This approach proved highly successful.

As the cited study reveals, verbal (or social reinforcement) of desirable or appropriate behavior tends to increase the frequency of that behavior. However, reinforcement has to be given immediately after the desirable behavior has been performed. If the desired behavior does not exist in the learner's repertoire, the behavior must be successively approximated. The learning task must be broken down into small steps, and each approximation must be properly reinforced until the target (final desirable) behavior has been achieved. For example, if a child cannot sit in his seat for a period longer than five seconds, he is reinforced (praised) for remaining in his seat for a lesser period of time initially (four seconds). As he is able to sit in his seat for that period of time, reinforcement is given for remaining in the seat for seven seconds, then ten seconds, then fifteen, and so on until he has succeeded in staying in his seat for the desired period of time. Gradually, by reinforcement of the successive approximations, remaining in seat behavior is greatly enhanced.

These procedures can be used to increase the strength or frequency of any pupil behavior under voluntary control. However, as we have noted, the teacher's approval or attention must be valued and it must be used appropriately.

In certain cases, the teacher will find that though she has attempted to ignore a child's behavior that peers in the classroom are doing the reinforcing for the deviant behavior. To reverse the effects of peer attention will involve creativity on the part of the teacher. For example, in one study by Zimmerman and Zimmerman (1962), a child was displaying temper tantrums which were reinforced by peer attention even though the teacher attempted to ignore it. To change this, a candy was placed on each child's desk and as soon as the child would turn to look at his peer who was having a temper tantrum, the candy was removed. In this way, the teacher was able to reduce the effects of peer attention of the temper tantrum behavior.

In another study by Barrish, Saunders, and Wolfe, 1969, the class was divided up into two groups and any time a member of either group called out inappropriately, a mark was removed from the board. If a certain number of marks were removed, the whole group did not receive a ten-minute privilege. In this way, peers put pressure on each other to conform to the classroom rules.

These two studies are just a few ways in which peer attention for negative behavior can be reduced and, instead, peer attention can be used to reward appropriate behavior.

Contingency Management - In addition to stimuli or other tangibles that induce a pleasant or satisfying state in the learner, there are other things (events, activities) that may be reinforcing and increase the strength or frequency of responses. The things to which reference is made are activities or events that follow as a consequence of a given behavior. That is, certain things happen that are contingent upon a response that is executed. Contingency management systematically applies the Premack Principle which suggests that any behavior that has a high probability of occurring can be used to strengthen a behavior of lower probability. If an event that has a high probability of occurring (and is also high desirable) is paired with a behavior that has a lower probability of occurring (is less desirable), the low probability behavior tends to increase. For example, if a child is allowed to play with toys (high probability behavior) upon the completion of his spelling assignment (low probability behavior), his liking of spelling will also tend to be enhanced.

To use a contingency management system, activities and events that are highly desirable to children must be identified. These events are then displayed on a Reinforcing Events Menu pictorially or by simple listing. Then, previous to the performance of a given task or learning activity (low probability behavior), the learner identifies a reinforcing event from the menu in which he wishes to participate upon the successful performance of the task. The learning tasks must be graded so that the learner can successfully perform them and the reinforcing events must be commensurate to the difficulty or length of the assigned task. Standards of performance or accuracy are carefully determined and performance checks are usually given before the child is permitted to engage in the reinforcement event (Home, Csanyi, Gonzales, & Rechs, 1969).

Tasks or learning assignments are usually written so that the pupil knows exactly what he is asked to do. Successful task completion is followed by the reinforcing event which is performed in a separate area in the classroom. Separation of task and reinforcing activities keeps noise to reasonable limits and does not interfere with the learning activities of other pupils. Reinforcing events (on the menu) are changed periodically to avoid satiation. That is, a reinforcing event will no longer be reinforcing if performed too often.

A contingency management system has much to recommend it. First, its application greatly enhances pupil motivation and learning. Since there is an immediate "pay off" for each task completed, less desirable and unproductive negative methods (power, force or punishment) need not be used. Second, since the reinforcing events essentially involve opportunities to do things that are enjoyed, rather than getting tangible objects that cost money, the expense of the program is minimal. Third, contingency management procedures provide a structured program that helps the child learn to control his behavior. Fourth, the system eventually leads to a point at which the child begins to experience sufficient reinforcement from learning itself so that he can become a self-perpetuated learner.

Token Reinforcement System - A token reinforcement system essentially involves the use of coins, stamps, check marks or points to reinforce the performance of certain responses or behaviors. The tokens serve as a form of medium of exchange in that they may purchase certain tangible primary reinforcers, toys, special privileges or participate in certain desirable activities.

Check marks or points are most easily used because they can be placed on a student card which he keeps in his possession. The system is inexpensive and relatively easily administered by a teacher or teacher aide.

As is true of all reinforcement systems, tokens, check marks or points are given upon appropriate execution of certain behavior and they must initially be exchanged relatively frequently for the backup reinforcers (candy, privileges or favored activities). When the system is first implemented, the token exchange should be made at least twice a day. As desirable behaviors increase, the exchange time may be delayed a longer period of time.

Token systems are particularly useful when social reinforcers are ineffective in modifying a child's behavior. For example, Hewett (1969) has suggested that emotionally handicapped children often do not respond to adult social approval. These children need more "primitive" (primary) types of reinforcement initially. As the primary reinforcers begin to promote the desired behavior, it is then necessary to pair primary reinforcers with social reinforcement. And, as the child begins to achieve success in academic work, learning itself may become self reinforcing.

The items for which check marks or points are exchanged need not be of high monetary value. Each item should probably not cost more than ten cents. Such an item may be obtained when an individual pupil's card has been filled wich check marks. Thus, if one day is required to fill a pupil's card, the cost for a single pupil for one day would be ten cents.

A variety of items may be used as backup reinforcers. O'Leary and Becker (1967) used daily snacks, comic books, pennants, perfume and kites. However, other types of reinforcers may be used at no cost to the teacher. That is, a child may earn special privileges such as being allowed to do errands, taking care of class pets, earn free time, opportunity to listen to records and being allowed to read favorite books or magazines for a specified amount of time.

The earning of special privileges were found to be particularly effective in promoting desirable behavior in junior high school students (Borden, Hall, Dunlap & Clark, 1970). Privileges that were used as reinforcing events included being allowed to talk to a friend, going to lunch five minutes early, moving one's desk for a day and permission to get out of one's seat. Blackham and Silberman (1971) have identified a variety of potential reinforcers for children at different age and grade levels.

When parents can be induced to cooperate, they may also be effectively involved in the reinforcement of desirable child behavior. For example, if teachers are willing to spend time instructing the parents regarding the operation of a reinforcement system, they can be encouraged to use special privileges (viewing T.V., staying overnight with a friend, having friends visit, etc.) to reinforce both academic and social behavior.

From what has been said, it is likely apparent to the reader that the manner in which check marks or points are administered is vital to the successful operation of a token reinforcement system. In this regard, the suggestions of Kuybers, Becker and O'Leary (1968) for initiating and operating a token reinforcement system are well worth noting. Some of their suggestions are listed below:

1. The behaviors for which students earn points should be stated clearly and written on a chart or on the board so that all can see them. This list of rules should stay in effect during the entire program.

2. It should be explained to the children when they have earned a sufficient number of points and what they will be able to obtain when they have earned these points. It would be best at this time to show children some of the various reinforcers from which they may later choose. Not only should the trinket be shown, but also the various special privileges and activities should also be mentioned by the teacher.

3. Each child should be given a check mark card or a spiral notebook can be used. This card or notebook should be attached to the children's desks, and students should be told that this will be the place where their check marks will be recorded.

4. Teachers should inform the students that they will not receive prizes every day, and that sometimes points may have to be collected for two or more days before they can receive the prize.

5. At the beginning of each day, the teacher should go over the rules once again with the children. If different prizes require different amounts of points, the teacher should briefly mention this daily to the students.

6. When a child is rated by the teacher, he should know for what behaviors he has earned points, and which behaviors have caused him not to get the full amount of points.

7. Since some prizes may be highly desirable to children, it may be best if these are stored in a place where children cannot take them until they are earned.

8. The teacher should be aware of what type of reinforcers children like, and when possible, these should be obtained if the teacher does not already have them.

9. Prizes earned should be given out at the end of the school day. This will eliminate some children distracting other children by playing with the reinforcers that they have earned. When prizes are given at the end of the day, children should be told that these are their toys, and they must keep them at home. These toys, as well as any others that might be brought to school which might distract other people, will have to be taken away. The one exception to this rule should be for the first day. This will help to have children more motivated to earn points on following occasions.

10. A set number of maximum points for each interval of time should be established. Typically, ten points are used. This means that for every interval of time that children are rated by their teacher or aide, they can earn anywhere from one to ten points, depending upon their behavior.

11. At first, the interval of time in which children receive check marks should be quite frequent. Hewett (1968) uses 15 minute intervals of time. This means that every 15 minutes, each child is rated from one to ten on his behavior in the previous 15 minutes. Gradually, it is suggested that the time interval be lengthened. For example, after the third week of school, the time interval can be increased to 20 minutes, two weeks later to 25 minutes, a week later to 30 minutes. It is suggested that the interval of time should not exceed more than 45 minutes for when the children are rated. With some children, this 45 minute interval of time will be too long, and the teacher may not wish to go over 30 minutes in rating each child.

12. When the teacher is administering points, she should not argue with the child about how many points he has earned. She should merely record the number of points she feels he has earned, and if the child argues with her, she should walk away. If a teacher changes her mind when the child is arguing with her, she will only increase the child's argumentive behavior.

Teachers are sometimes concerned that children will become excessively dependent on tokens as necessary incentives for learning. In part, this may be true if steps are not taken to change the elements of the reinforcement system. Two considerations are particularly important in making this transition. First, as the pupil begins to perform and behave appropriately, the amount of academic work that is required to earn check marks or points is gradually extended. Second, during the process of using and administering reinforcement, the teacher must take care to pair social reinforcement (praise) with token reinforcement. That is, when a child has received points or check marks for work done satisfactorily, the teacher also praises the child for his achievements. In due time, praise acquires the capacity to serve as a reinforcer that maintains the performance and behavior of the pupil. Also, by making the pupil aware that his continued academic and behavioral growth will lead to a return to the regular classroom, his efforts are considerably enhanced.

Intervention Methods

If social reinforcement, contingency management and token reinforcement systems are properly used, the disruptive behavior of emotionally handicapped children can usually be handled effectively. There are usually a few children, however, with whom these methods are not entirely effective. Other intervention methods must be employed. To deal with children whose behavior is explosive, uncontrolled and disruptive, two methods appear to be particularly useful: time out and systematic exclusion. Each of these methods are discussed in the following sections.

Time Out - Time out is a method of dealing with disruptive behavior by withdrawing or removing a child from a situation in which reinforcement is operating. Essentially it involves removing an acting out or disruptive child from the classroom to another room (or area) until he has regained control of his behavior. The situation to which the child is removed must not have any reinforcement property (a room in which a child can do things that he enjoys doing, or provide some other source of reinforcement), nor should the removal involve additional punishment. Once removed, the child should remain in time out (usually not more than 15 minutes) until he exhibits desirable behavior. Otherwise, the release from the time out room will act to reinforce the undesirable behavior.

As we have noted, the effective use of time out requires that it terminates reinforcement operating in the classroom and that removal to the time out room is not construed by the child as reinforcing. If the classroom is perceived as aversive, removal from it will be reinforcing and the undesirable behavior will increase in strength or frequency. Similarly, if the time out area is perceived as a rewarding or pleasant place to be, the inappropriate behavior is reinforced. Hence, during the time the child is in time out all sources of reinforcement are terminated. No one should be permitted to talk to the child, reward or comfort him in any way. If a token reinforcement system is operating in the classroom, the child, cannot, of course, receive points while in time out.

To prevent possible contagious effects of the misbehaving child (and his behavior), it is sometimes desirable to reinforce the child's classmates (give bonus points) for not responding or attending to the misbehaving child his disruptive behavior episodes. Such a tactic further eliminates any reinforcement a misbehaving child may get for his intractable behavior.

Although a separate room functions best as a time out room, other arrangements are possible. It is sometimes possible to screen off a small part of the classroom as a time out area. If the child's behavior is not too disruptive or noisy, these arrangements can work effectively.

Systematic Exclusion - There are occasions when an emotionally handicapped child's behavior is so untractable that more decisive intervention steps need to be taken. For such occasions a method developed by Kiersey (1969) called "systematic exclusion," is most appropriate. Systematic exclusion is a method of withdrawing a child from the classroom according to terms of a contract to which child, parents, teacher and principal have agreed to and signed. The contract is usually initiated when the child's behavior has become so uncontrolled or disruptive that it is unproductive for the child to be in school.

Although contracts vary, the terms typically specify behaviors of the child that will automatically lead to exclusion (being sent home), exactly how the contract will be carried out and the responsibilities and/or roles of each party involved in the contract. Essentially, the child is permitted to stay in school as long as his behavior is not disruptive or in violation of contractual terms. When it does, the teacher signals him to leave the classroom and he is immediately picked up by a parent and taken home. According to the terms of the contract, the child stays in the house (and preferably a particular room in the house) and is not permitted to engage in any reinforcing activities. The parents are asked to neither punish, scold or discuss the child's behavior with him. The child is confined to the house for the remainder of the day (or in some cases until the end of the regular school day). The following day he is returned to school and his attendance is once more contingent on the terms of the contract.

It is sometimes helpful to use reinforcement along with the more standard features of the systematic exclusion procedure. That is, points (which may be exchanged for tangible reinforcers or special privileges) may be given when certain desirable behavior is performed. For example, points may be given for successful completion of academic work, for proper behavior or both. However, it must be recognized that such specifications must be identified in the contract and agreed to by all parties.

From the description of this method, it is apparent that systematic exclusion (involving careful specification of terms) tends to structure the consequences of a child's behavior and makes his environment very predictable. Yet, he is given responsibility for his own behavior. He is not cajoled, ridiculed or pleaded with to behave properly. Rather, when he does not, certain predictable consequences follow. Kiersey (1969) reports that the method works well for students in both elementary and high school, although varying amounts of time are required before the child behaves acceptably.

In instances in which the child cannot be taken home (because both parents are absent during the day), systematic exclusion may also be used by placing the child in the principal or nurse's office for the remainder of the school day. He is not permitted to eat lunch with the other children or participate in other reinforcing events.

Phasing Children Into The Regular Program

The ultimate goal of a special class for emotionally handicapped children is to return them to the regular class as soon as possible. The time required to achieve this varies with each child. Some children may be phased into the regular class program within a period of three or four months. Other children may not be returned to a regular class for two years or more. It is recommended that time to be spent in the emotionally handicapped classroom be given careful consideration prior to the child's enrollment. The personnel involved in evaluation and placement should project and set goals for returning the child as soon as possible based upon the behavioral and academic evaluations at their disposal. Careful and continuous evaluation is necessary during the child's entire stay. Both academic and behavioral signs should be carefully assessed as the child's returning date nears.

Some of the signs or indications to look for are listed below:

1. The child is increasingly more receptive to teacher approval and less concerned with the reinforcements (points, check marks) he has earned.

2. The child is more able to delay. That is, if a reinforcement system is being used, he is able to delay 45 minutes before receiving his points and at the same time display appropriate student behavior.

3. A decrease in the expression of maladaptive behavior and an increase in appropriate student behavior. Such behavior should be displayed in the classroom and on the playground.

4. Increases in the child's spontaneous (positive) verbalization about school.

5. Reasonable evidence of academic progress as measured by standardized tests. A minimum criterion should be one month academic gain for each month in the program.

When the above criteria have been met, certain steps should be taken to insure the child's success in the regular program. First, it is desirable to ascertain the subject matter or skill area in which the child is most proficient. He should then be re-introduced into the regular program in that subject matter area for one period a day and then returned to the special class for the remainder of the day. If this meets with success, he is then introduced to the second subject matter area in which he is most proficient. This plan is subsequently followed for each subject area until he is integrated into a regular classroom completely.

It might be wise if the teacher in the emotionally handicapped program asks the teacher in the regular program to rate the child's behavior and achievement each day before he returns to the special education classroom. When the child returns to the emotionally handicapped classroom, the teacher should convert that rating into points. The teacher in the special education classroom should encourage the teacher in the regular school program to be as liberal as possible with her rating, so as to help the child feel he is meeting with success in the regular classroom.

If the above approach seems to be working, the child should be returned to the regular program for the whole day and after school he should report to the special education teacher with his daily rating and receive points. This should be continued for at least two weeks and then the reinforcers can be dispensed by a teacher in the regular classroom, or by the child's parents. Eventually, the recording of points should be shifted to weekly, so as to begin to approximate a type of weekly report card. This will make the transition from check marks to regular report cards much easier for the child.

A final comment should be made here about token systems. In a number of studies, token systems have been found to be effective with children who are displaying both learning and behavioral difficulties. Failure in the method usually appears to be due, not to the method itself, but rather to the person who is implementing the method. This is why great care should be taken in planning a program that involves a token system. Ideally, as Kuypers, Becker and O'Leary (1968) state, teachers should be trained in behavior modification and ways of using a formal token system.

Token systems may outwardly appear simple, but are based upon a number of learning principles. Though these principles are not complex, a teacher using such a method should be aware of them if the system is to be effective. Blackham and Silberman (1971) devote several chapters to discussing these basic principles, as well as to specific methods to implementing behavior modification procedures with children.

A token system should not be used by itself, but used with other methods, such as those discussed above. Of course, as indicated in this chapter, the curriculum is also a vital part of any successful program. This view is best summarized by Kuypers, Becker and O'Leary, when they state: "A token system is not a mechanical procedure to be applied in a mechanical way. It is simply one tool within a larger set of tools available to the teacher concerned with improving the behavior of children. The full set of equipment is needed to do the job right." (p. 108)

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